

Exhibit 3. Project Letters

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SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0012
(916) 319-2012
FAX (916) 319-2112



COMMITTEES
AGRICULTURE
BUDGET
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC
MATERIALS
JUDICIARY
UTILITIES AND ENERGY

BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON
CLIMATE CRISIS, RESOURCES,
ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION

JOINT COMMITTEE
VICE CHAIR: LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

August 31, 2023

Douglass Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612

RE: Ducks Unlimited Grant for Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration

Dear Chairman Bosco,

I am writing to express my support for the grant request submitted by Ducks Unlimited for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration Project. This grant would provide capstone funds for restoration planning of up to 6,000 acres of the Sonoma Creek Baylands within San Pablo Bay, where over 80% of the historic wetlands have been diked for agriculture. The project will lead to shovel-ready plans to restore six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals.

This project will substantially advance regional efforts to restore endangered fish and wildlife populations within my district. Additionally, the project strategy includes targeted outreach to gain tribal, community, and stakeholder buy-in, as well as plans to improve public access by identifying recreational opportunities in resilient locations. Restoration will integrate natural processes to maximize appropriate estuarine habitats, incorporate upland and watershed connections, and evaluate opportunities and constraints for reduction of chronic flooding.

Implementation of this landscape-level project will restore estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving existing levels of flood protection for critical infrastructure. I urge the Conservancy to fund the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration Project to restore critical estuarine habitat for the benefit of humans and wildlife.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request. If my office can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 319-2012.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Connolly", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

DAMON CONNOLLY
AT:DC



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex
1 Marshlands Road
Fremont, California 94555



August 11, 2023

Douglass Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco,

On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), I am writing to express my support for projects that seek to restore tidal wetlands to benefit wildlife, such as Ducks Unlimited's (DU) California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) application titled "Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Phase 1 Planning" (Project). The Service has been working in partnership with DU and other partners to restore and protect thousands of acres of lands that are part of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge).

The Project application includes a request for SCC funding for planning, design, and environmental compliance for Phase 1 of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy (Strategy), which includes over 6,000 acres in the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands. The Project will lead to shovel-ready plans to restore six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals. As a major landowner throughout San Francisco Bay and beyond, we have seen firsthand the threats of climate change including increased flooding, erosion, and habitat retreat. Implementation of this landscape-level Project will restore estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving existing levels of flood protection for infrastructure.

We have successfully partnered with the project co-leads (DU and Sonoma Land Trust) on projects on the Refuge. We have worked with DU in the North Bay for decades on large projects including Cullinan Ranch Restoration Project, Sears Point Wetland Restoration Project, Skaggs Island restoration planning, and Haire Ranch Restoration Project. The latter two Refuge properties are included in Phase 1 of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy, and we see their restoration as urgent and as our highest priority for restoration actions on the Refuge. Restoration of these properties will meet regional habitat and species goals in advance of accelerating rates of sea level rise. The Strategy was informed by multiple Service plans including Recovery Plan for Tidal Marsh Ecosystems of Northern and Central California, San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge

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Comprehensive Conservation Plan and San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge
Complex Natural Resource Management Plan.

The Refuge recognizes the collaborative planning process that informed the conservation vision laid out in the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy and looks forward to partnering with SCC, DU, Sonoma Land Trust, and others in implementing the vision therein.

The Service supports projects that create and restore tidal wetland habitat to support the endangered species and other wildlife that the Refuge was established to protect. DU's Project will help to achieve our goals by supporting recovery plans for endangered Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse, create habitat for other important wildlife such as migratory birds, and will also greatly improve our visitor services, ensuring sustainable public access to this critical ecosystem for generations to come.

If you have any questions regarding this Project, please contact me at (510) 377-9229 or melisa_amato@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Melisa Amato
Refuge Manager
San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge

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July 31, 2023

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612

RE: Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration

Dear Chairman Bosco:

In spring 2022, it was our privilege to provide you, Amy Hutzler, and other State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) staff with a tour of the Petaluma River and Sonoma Creek Baylands. With our regional strategy complete, it is time to begin the focused work of designing and permitting the largest tidal wetland restoration project to date in the Sonoma Creek Baylands. To that effect, we are writing in support of Ducks Unlimited's (DU's) request for SCC funding for planning, design, and environmental compliance for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration, which includes up to 6,000 acres of land identified for conservation and restoration. The project will result in shovel-ready plans to restore up to six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals. Implementation of this landscape-level project will restore estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving existing levels of flood protection for infrastructure.

SLT spearheaded regional planning with publication of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy in 2020. Project partners were integral to the process and included San Francisco Estuary Institute, Point Blue Conservation Science, Ducks Unlimited, ESA, Sonoma Water, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The study's development underwent technical review by a Science Advisory Panel. The Strategy integrates natural processes and calls for restoring tidal flows through the diked baylands, protecting high-value fringing marsh in existing channels, and increasing overall climate resilience in the Sonoma Creek Baylands.

SLT partners with local communities to protect the open, natural, and working lands and waters of Sonoma County to secure healthy and thriving futures for all. As a leader in land conservation, as well as a major property owner in the North Bay, we see implementation of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy as a critical pathway to increase the pace and scale of restoration in the region. We recognize the urgent need for accelerated action as we face the impacts of a changing climate. When implemented, this project will provide habitat for migratory waterbirds, fish, and

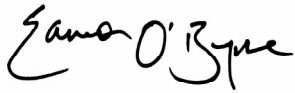
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endangered species including Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse, while also providing flood protection for essential public infrastructure.

SLT is working to acquire fee title for two properties, Camps 4 and 5, which comprise nearly 1,400 acres in the Phase 1 planning area. SLT agrees to allow DU access for any necessary planning tasks including site investigations, baseline studies, permitting, and design activities for the collaboratively planned project.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration planning proposal. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to Julian Meisler, Baylands Program Manager, at (707) 596-6203 or julian@sonomalandtrust.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eamon O'Byrne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eamon" and last name "O'Byrne" clearly distinguishable.

Eamon O'Byrne
Executive Director



July 12, 2023

Douglass Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612

RE: Letter of Support for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Phase I Planning Proposal

Mr. Bosco,

We are writing to express Sonoma County Water Agency's and Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District's support of Duck's Unlimited's (DU's) request for California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) funding for planning Phase I of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy (the Strategy)—a landscape-scale restoration plan for over 6,000 acres in the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands. The low-lying lands of the Sonoma Creek Baylands are susceptible to flooding and erosion, made increasingly worse by sea-level rise. This proposal seeks to dramatically advance progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals by restoring six properties, comprising the first phase of the Strategy. The proposal includes planning, design, and environmental compliance tasks which will lead to shovel-ready restoration plans for the eastern portion of the Sonoma Creek Baylands.


The Hudeman Slough Enhancement Wetlands (Hudeman Wetlands) are owned by the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District (District). The District is managed under contract by the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water). The Hudeman Wetlands are comprised of three management units, 120 acres in total, on the northern perimeter of the project area. The historic baylands were leveed in the 1950s and portions of the property were farmed as late as the 1980s. The District acquired the property in 1988 to implement the Hudeman Slough Wetland Enhancement Project with the plan to restore historic wetlands, provide public access, and put reclaimed water to beneficial use by maintaining freshwater wetland habitat. The Hudeman Wetlands include approximately 120 acres of grasslands, freshwater ponds, seasonal freshwater wetlands, seasonal saline wetlands, permanent ponds, and diked brackish marsh. Hudeman Slough itself is not part of the wetland enhancement area. Also, three constructed reservoirs, used to store recycled water, are located along the upland side of the property. Recycled water from these storage reservoirs are used by local agriculture for irrigation, by the Napa Sonoma Marsh Restoration Project for dilution from the brackish ponds, and to manage seasonal wetland habitat within the Hudeman wetlands. These properties also provide public access along the levee trails, including a segment of the Bay Trail. The public access through the properties would be improved through the strategic public access planning in Phase 1 of the proposed project. Restoration of the undeveloped portions of the property would maximize habitat connectivity in the watershed, enable upland connections, and protect critical infrastructure from sea level rise. Members of our staff served on the Science Advisory Panel to the Strategy, and we firmly believe in the importance of this plan for restoring estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving flood protection in our region.

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Douglass Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
July 12, 2023
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Sonoma Water and the District is partnering in and supports the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Phase I Planning proposal because of the landscape scale approach and the tangible benefits it will provide to habitat restoration to benefit fish and wildlife, and because we believe this proposal will advance resilience for this region and increase its adaptive capacity to sea level rise. We respectfully encourage you to support this proposal and look forward to partnering with SCC, Wildlife Conservation Board, DU, Sonoma Land Trust, and others in implementing the vision therein. If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Jessica Martini-Lamb, Environmental Resources Manager at (707) 547-1903 or jessica.martinilamb@scwa.ca.gov or Carlos Diaz, Principal Engineer, at (707) 547-1956 or carlos.diaz@scwa.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Grant Davis

July 20, 2023

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay St, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Support for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration, Phase 1 Planning

Mr. Bosco,

We are writing in support of Duck's Unlimited's (DU's) request for CSCC funding for planning, design, and environmental compliance for Phase 1 of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration, which includes over 6,000 acres in the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands. The project will lead to shovel-ready plans to restore six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals. Implementation of this landscape-level project will restore estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving existing levels of flood protection for infrastructure.

San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) worked closely with the Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) and other project partners to develop the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy. The process involved extensive analysis of existing site conditions, development of restoration alternatives, evaluation of habitat evolution, and assessment of the feasibility and cost of alternatives—all of which was peer-reviewed by a Science Advisory Panel. The plan integrates natural processes and calls for restoring tidal flows through the diked baylands, protecting high-value fringing marsh in existing channels and increasing overall climate resilience of the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands.

As a leading aquatic and ecosystem science institute in the Bay Area, our mission is to provide scientific support and tools for decision-making through collaborative efforts. We see the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy as a critical pathway to maintain ecologic function of these wetlands, which is vital to our communities. When implemented, this project will provide habitat for migratory waterbirds, fish, and endangered species including Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse, while also providing flood protection for essential public infrastructure.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Phase 1 Planning Proposal. If you have any questions do not hesitate to reach out to Jeremy Lowe, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (510)-746-7372 or jeremyl@sfei.org.

Sincerely,

Warner Chabot

Warner Chabot
Executive Director

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4911 Central Ave
Richmond, CA 94804

July 12, 2023

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

MANAGEMENT BOARD:

NGO and Industry Members:

Audubon California
Audubon Canyon Ranch
Bay Planning Coalition
Citizens Committee to
Complete the Refuge
Ducks Unlimited
Point Blue Conservation Science
Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Save the Bay
Together Bay Area
Individuals

Agency Members:

Bay Conservation &
Development Commission
California Department
of Fish and Wildlife
California Natural Resources Agency
California State Coastal Conservancy
California Wildlife Conservation Board
Coastal Region, Mosquito &
Vector Control Districts
National Marine Fisheries
Service
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
San Francisco Estuary Partnership
SF Bay Regional Water Quality
Control Board
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey

RE: SFBJV Support for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration, Phase 1
Planning Proposal

Dear Mr. Bosco,

We are writing to express the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture's (SFBJV's) support of Duck's Unlimited's (DU's) request for California Coastal Conservancy funding for Sonoma Creek Baylands restoration, spanning over 6,000 acres in the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands. The proposal includes planning, design, and environmental compliance to restore six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals. The North Bay has lost significant acreage of historic wetlands to diking and draining; however, vast lands exist with restoration potential in the North Bay, with the most extensive opportunities to restore entire marsh ecosystems from subtidal to uplands beyond Suisun Marsh.

The SFBJV is a partnership of non-governmental organizations, utilities, landowners, and non-voting agencies with goals to protect, restore, and enhance all types of wetlands to provide benefits to birds, fish, other wildlife, and people in the San Francisco Bay Area. The SFBJV is one of twenty-two federally-sponsored habitat Joint Ventures to implement the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and federal bird conservation plans. The SFBJV Management Board consists of 25 members who agree to promote the goals and objectives of SFBJV and who represent the diversity of wetland interests found in the San Francisco Bay region. We recently updated these goals, and the 2022 SFBJV Implementation Strategy, *Restoring the Estuary*, targets significant acreages of wetlands, subtidal habitat, seasonal wetlands, and riparian habitats for protection, restoration, and/or enhancement. The plan also calls for a dramatic and immediate increase in the pace and scale of action as we face the accelerated impacts of a changing climate. The Implementation Strategy goals for the North Bay include the long-term goal of restoring 70% of the baylands in the North Bay to tidal action. We strongly believe that the proposed landscape-level project is a critical pathway to achieving this ambitious goal, and a necessary action for maintaining wildlife habitat and coastal resilience in the region.

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The Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy Phase 1 Project represents an unparalleled conservation opportunity to achieve habitat goals in the North Bay, which supports the tidal wetland and upland transition zone goals laid out in the SFBJV's Implementation Strategy as well as achieving key recommendations of *The Baylands and Climate Change: What We Can Do* (2015). SFBJV recognizes the collaborative planning process that informed the conservation vision laid out in the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy and looks forward to partnering with California Coastal Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Board, DU, Sonoma Land Trust, and others in implementing the vision therein. If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Nikki Roach, SFBJV Policy & Communications Coordinator at nroach@sfbayjv.org.

Sincerely,

Nikki Roach

Nikki Roach, PhD
San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Policy and
Communications Coordinator



July 11, 2023

To: Douglass Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612

From: Manuel J Oliva, Chief Executive Officer
Point Blue Conservation Science
3820 Cypress Dr. #11
Petaluma, CA 94954

RE: Support for the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration Phase 1 Planning Proposal

Mr. Bosco,

Point Blue supports Ducks Unlimited (DU) in their request for California State Coastal Conservancy funding for planning, design, and environmental compliance for Phase 1 of the Sonoma Creek Baylands restoration, which includes over 6,000 acres in the lower Sonoma Creek Baylands. The project will lead to shovel-ready plans to restore six properties, dramatically advancing progress towards regional habitat restoration and climate resilience goals. Restoring the Sonoma Baylands is one of the most important actions required to protect the endangered Ridgway's rail, among other sensitive wildlife species in San Pablo Bay.

At Point Blue, our mission is to conserve birds, other wildlife, and ecosystems through science, partnerships, and outreach. A major facet of the work we do at Point Blue is focused on improving the resiliency of our shorelines to climate change, which includes protecting, enhancing, and restoring wetlands habitats in the San Francisco Bay Estuary. Our science-based approach to support thriving baylands ecosystems has guided restoration work throughout the Bay, including the Baylands Goals Science Update which was informed by our results on tidal marsh response to sea-level rise. We are committed to using our data and partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies to inform restoration to benefit birds in the baylands.

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Point Blue worked closely with the Sonoma Land Trust, DU, and other project partners to develop the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy. Implementation of this landscape-level project will restore estuarine habitats in a planned and strategic way, while maintaining or improving existing levels of flood protection for infrastructure. We believe that climate smart conservation is the critical pathway to ensuring that human and wildlife communities continue to thrive into the future. We see implementing the Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy as a critical pathway to restoring ecologic function of these wetlands, which provide habitat for migratory waterbirds, fish, and endangered species including the Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of the Sonoma Creek Baylands Restoration, Phase 1 Planning Proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manuel J. Oliva', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Manuel J. Oliva
Chief Executive Officer
Point Blue Conservation Science